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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 QUITO 000855

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/18/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EC](#)

SUBJECT: STATE OF EMERGENCY: USG OUTREACH CRITICAL

Classified By: Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney, Reason 1.4 (b&d)

¶1. (C) Summary: After the declaration of a state of emergency by President Gutierrez on the evening of April 15, Embassy Quito and Consulate Guayaquil, working with other USG colleagues, acted quickly to encourage GOE restraint and non-violence. The Mission team (including several Embassy sections and Consulate Guayaquil), with terrific support from DOD, DOS, and Treasury colleagues in Washington and Miami, conducted extensive outreach to contacts, including the President and other GOE officials, opposition politicians, GOE military, business leaders, indigenous leaders, and NGO contacts. We believe these coordinated efforts contributed to the early end of the state of emergency and commendable restraint on the part of the GOE military. End Summary.

Ambassador Leads Embassy Outreach To GOE

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¶2. (C) Team Effort: The Ambassador convened three Country Team/EAC meetings over the weekend of April 16-17 to assess the political situation. At these meetings, various sections were able to share information gathered from their outreach. The Ambassador led this outreach by calling President Gutierrez on the evening of April 15, as well as on the morning of April 16, to urge the lifting of the state of emergency as soon as possible, and to urge restraint in the face of peaceful protests and respect for civil rights. The Ambassador and DCM had breakfast with Gutierrez on April 18 and suggested he signal conciliation by complimenting Congress on its April 17 resolution and calling for dialogue. They also suggested the Cabinet be more actively involved in resolving the turbulent political situation.

¶3. (C) Presidency: Upon learning from clandestine sources that the state of emergency would be declared, the Ambassador spoke with Presidential Legal Advisor Carlos Larrea to express USG concern. Larrea told us the state of emergency was "a fact" and could not be changed. Shortly after the President issued his declaration publicly (the announcement was apparently taped hours before), Ambassador-designate to the US Mauricio Pozo called the Ambassador to convey Gutierrez' reasons for the decree. The Ambassador and EconCouns also spoke with Presidential Secretary Carlos Polit several times over the weekend, though he was in the US.

¶4. (C) Cabinet and Other Embassies: The Ambassador and EconCouns also contacted several Cabinet members including Minister of Commerce Ivonne Baki, Minister of Finance Mauricio Yepez (in Washington), Minister of Labor Raul Izurieta, and Presidential Secretary Carlos Polit, urging them to help bring about a quick end to the state of emergency. The Ministers unanimously agreed with a call for restraint and dialogue and said they would convey this message to the President at the Cabinet meeting held on April 16. With a visit by Chilean President Lagos in the offing, the Ambassador called her Chilean counterpart to enlist Chilean intervention with Gutierrez to encourage the lifting of the state of emergency. President Lagos called Gutierrez on April 17 to promise to reschedule his visit, and encourage GOE respect for democratic norms, according to the Chilean Ambassador here. Ambassador and DCM worked their Spanish Embassy counterparts over the weekend as well, who have been urging moderation from their contacts within the Democratic Left opposition.

¶5. (C) Opposition: PolOffs called various opposition leaders to gauge Congressional reaction to the state of emergency and urge restraint and constructive dialogue.

¶6. (C) Military: DAO and MILGP spoke with Joint Forces Chief Admiral Victor Rosero and Army Commander General Luis Aguas on April 16. Rosero was later able to confirm that Aguas had not been dismissed, as had been rumored. DAO also spoke with the Chilean Defense Attaché who confirmed that Chilean President had canceled his trip to Quito, planned for April 18-19. On April 18, the Ambassador spoke with Minister of Defense Nelson Herrera to praise the military's professionalism under difficult circumstances. The Ambassador also met with Rosero on April 18 to encourage continued military respect for constitutional norms.

Reaching Out to Civil Society

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¶7. (SBU) ECON counseled calm and monitored reaction by key

private sector leaders.

**18.** (C) Citizens Groups: The DCM called Cesar Montufar of NGO Citizen Participation on April 15 to urge calm and recommend he (a possible target of GOE suspension of civil rights) go to a secure location. AID extended our outreach to other NGO contacts, such as Cornelio Marchan of the Esquel Foundation, to monitor civil society efforts and promote dialogue.

**19.** (C) Indigenous: POL made several calls to gauge the indigenous reaction to the declaration of a state of emergency. On April 16, PolOff spoke with indigenous leaders (Santiago de la Cruz, CONAIE; Raul Ilaquiche, ECUARUNARI; and Marco Murillo, FEINE) who were meeting within their respective organizations to decide next steps. PolOff also spoke with indigenous Congressman Jorge Guaman (Pachakutik) on April 16. PolOff spoke again with indigenous leaders on April 18 confirming the President's revocation of the state of emergency had lowered tensions and made a general indigenous anti-government mobilization less likely.

Support AmCit Safety, Embassy Operations

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**110.** (U) Activating immediately as part of Embassy EAC, RSO and CONS combined efforts to keep Embassy and AmCits safe and informed about evolving risks. Making all these outreach and reporting efforts possible, MGT provided crucial communications and logistical support which allowed for 24-hour Embassy operations.

Guayaquil Contacts Coastal Leaders

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**111.** (SBU) On April 15-16, CG and Pol/EconOff spoke with PSC party leaders as well as business leaders. On April 15-16, the CG spoke with Miguel Orellana, son-in-law of PSC leader Leon Febres Cordero. CG stressed our desire to see a government functioning with stable democratic institutions. The CG also spoke with Guayaquil mayor Jaime Nebot (PSC) and expressed the Ambassador's appreciation of his measured response to the state of emergency. Reaching out to the private sector, Pol/EconOff also spoke with Chamber of Commerce VP Teodoro Maldonado on April 16, who described the efforts of business chambers to support Nebot's evolving protest strategy. Consulate Guayaquil also spoke with former government officials, private business representatives, as well as the AmCham president to encourage calm and promote dialogue.

DOD Urges GOE Military Restraint

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**112.** (C) Support from high-ranking DOD officials was essential in helping get out our message of restraint on the part of the military during the state of emergency. On April 11, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Richard Myers visit to Quito had already helped support our pro-democracy and pro-stability agenda and our continued commitment to military cooperation. US SOUTHCOM CDR General Brantz Craddock's April 16 call to Ecuador Joint Forces Chief Admiral Victor Rosero furthered our message of military restraint during the state of emergency.

**113.** (U) In the end, GOE military acted very professionally and with great restraint during the crisis. It is worth noting that Admiral Rosero received training in the US under the IMET program and his excellent leadership shows the lasting results of this type of exchange. Unfortunately, future military leaders will not have the same development opportunities with IMET suspended.

Washington Officials Pitch In

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**114.** (C) A/S Roger Noriega and DAS Charles Shapiro spoke with GOE Presidential Advisor Carlos Polit early on to express USG concern over the state of emergency. Department officials did the same with the Ecuadorian Charge in Washington. Department of Treasury and international financial institutions also played an important role, counseling Minister of Finance Mauricio Yepez on the possible negative repercussions of recent events. Yepez, in turn, relayed their concern to President Gutierrez.

Comment

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**115.** (C) Ultimately, President Gutierrez decision to lift the state of emergency was probably the result of a wide range of factors. The USG's immediate and unequivocal response was undoubtedly one key factor, of which we can be proud. With the emergency over, but the resulting political crisis in full sway, we will continue to use our contacts to follow the political situation and urge dialogue and reconciliation.

Support from our colleagues in Washington and Miami will continue to multiply our efforts here to promote constitutional order, political stability, and dialogue.

KENNEY